DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 517 TM 023 752

AUTHOR Fetterman, David M.
TITLE Empowerment Evaluation: A Form of Self-Evaluation.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 35p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cooperation; *Evaluation Methods; Evaluation Utilization; Program Evaluation; Program Improvement; Qualitative Research; *Research Methodology; Self Determination; *Self Evaluation (Groups); *Training
IDENTIFIERS *Empowerment

ABSTRACT

Empowerment evaluation is an innovative approach that uses evaluation concepts and techniques to foster improvement and self-determination. Empowerment evaluation employs qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Although it can be applied to individuals and organizations, the usual focus is on programs. The value orientation of empowerment evaluation is unambiguous because it is designed to help people help themselves using a form of self-evaluation and reflection. As a result, it is necessarily a collaborative group activity. Training, facilitation, advocacy, illumination, and liberation are facets of empowerment evaluation. There are also several pragmatic steps in helping others learn to evaluate their own programs: (1) taking stock; (2) focusing on establishing goals; (3) developing strategies and helping participants determine their own strategies to accomplish program goals and objectives; and (4) helping program participants determine the type of evidence required to document progress. Empowerment evaluation is creating a new niche in the landscape of evaluation. It is political because it has an empowerment agenda and a bias for the disenfranchised, but it can be used to help anyone with a desire for self-determination. (Contains 47 references.) (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

DAVID FETTERMAN

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED 387 517

Empowerment Evaluation: A Form of Self-Evaluation

David M. Fetterman
California Institute of Integral Studies
and
Stanford University

email: davidf@leland.stanford.edu

© American Educational Research Association, April 18-22, San Francisco, CA 1995

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TM023352

Empowerment Evaluation: A Form of Self-Evaluation

David M. Fetterman

Empowerment evaluation is an innovative approach to evaluation. It has been adopted in higher education, government, inner-city public education, nonprofit corporations, and foundations throughout the United States and abroad. A wide range of programs use empowerment evaluation, including substance abuse prevention, accelerated schools, HIV prevention, crime prevention, welfare reform, battered women's shelters, agriculture and rural development, adult probation, adolescent pregnancy prevention, tribal partnership for substance abuse, self-determination and individuals with disabilities, and doctoral programs. Descriptions of how many of these programs use empowerment evaluation appear in this collection. Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman in press) also provides additional insight into this new evaluation approach, including information about how to conduct workshops to train program staff members and participants to evaluate and improve program practice. (See also Fetterman 1994c.) In addition, this approach has been institutionalized within the American Evaluation Association[1] and is consistent with the spirit of the standards developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (Fetterman 1995; Joint Committee, 1994).[2]

Despite its increasingly wide use, empowerment evaluation is not a panacea; nor is it designed to replace all forms of evaluation. It meets a specific evaluation need: to help program participants evaluate themselves and their program to improve practice and foster self-determination. In this capacity it may also influence other forms of evaluation and audit[3] to adopt a more collaborative and participatory tone, This new approach is still evolving; there is much to learn, explore, refine, and improve. As with other forms of evaluation, we constantly learn more about the craft as we practice it.

Definition and Focus

Empowerment evaluation is the use of evaluation concepts and techniques to foster improvement and self-determination. It employs both qualitative and quantitative

methodologies. Although it can be applied to individuals, organizations (at both intra- and extra-organizational levels)[4], communities, and societies or cultures, the focus is on programs. It is attentive to empowering processes and outcomes. Zimmerman's work on empowerment theory provides the theoretical framework for empowerment evaluation. According to Zimmerman (in press):

> A distinction between empowering processes and outcomes is critical in order to clearly define empowerment theory. Empowerment processes are ones in which attempts to gain control, obtain needed resources, and critically understand one's social environment are fundamental. The process is empowering if it helps people develop skills so they can become independent problem solvers and decision makers. Empowering processes will vary across levels of analysis. For example, empowering processes for individuals might include organizational or community involvement, empowering processes at the organizational level might include shared leadership and decision making, and empowering processes at the community level might include accessible government, media, and other community resources.
>
> Empowered outcomes refer to operationalization of empowerment so we can study the consequences of citizen attempts to gain greater control in their community or the effects of interventions designed to empower participants. Empowered outcomes also differ across levels of analysis. When we are concerned with individuals, outcomes might include situation specific perceived control, skills, and proactive behaviors. When we are studying organizations, outcomes might include organizational networks, effective resource acquisition, and policy leverage. When we are concerned with community level empowerment, outcomes might include evidence of pluralism, the existence of organizational coalitions, and accessible community resources.

Empowerment evaluation has an unambiguous value orientation -- it is designed to help people help themselves and improve their programs using a form of self-evaluation and reflection.

Program participants conduct their own evaluations and typically act as facilitators; an outside evaluator often serves as a coach or additional facilitator depending on internal program capabilities. Zimmerman's characterization of the community psychologist's role in empowering activities is easily adapted to the empowerment evaluator:

> An empowerment approach to intervention design, implementation, and evaluation redefines the professional's role relationship with the target population. The professional's role becomes one of collaborator and facilitator rather than expert and counselor. As collaborators, professionals learn about the participants through their culture, their world view, and their life struggles. The professional works *with* participants instead of advocating *for* them. The professional's skills, interest, or plans are not imposed on the community; rather, professionals become a resource for a community. This role relationship suggests that what professionals do will depend on the particular place and people with whom they are working, rather than on the technologies that are predetermined to be applied in all situations. While interpersonal assessment and evaluation skills will be necessary, how, where, and with whom they are applied can not be automatically assumed as in the role of a psychotherapist with clients in a clinic (in press).

Empowerment evaluation is necessarily a collaborative group activity, not an individual pursuit. An evaluator does not and cannot empower anyone; people empower themselves, often with assistance and coaching. This process is fundamentally democratic. It invites (if not demands) participation, examining issues of concern to the entire community in an open forum.

As a result, the context changes: the assessment of a program's value and worth is not the endpoint of the evaluation--as it often is in traditional evaluation --but part of an ongoing process of program improvement. This new context acknowledges a simple but often overlooked truth: that merit and worth are not static values. Populations shift, goals shift, knowledge about program practices and their value change, and external forces are highly

unstable. By internalizing and institutionalizing self-evaluation processes and practices, a dynamic and responsive approach to evaluation can be developed to accommodate these shifts. Both value assessments and corresponding plans for program improvement--developed by the group with the assistance of a trained evaluator--are subject to a cyclical process of reflection and self-evaluation. Program participants learn to continually assess their progress toward self-determined goals, and to reshape their plans and strategies according to this assessment. In the process, self-determination is fostered, illumination generated, and liberation actualized.[5]

Value assessments are also highly sensitive to the life cycle of the program or organization. Goals and outcomes are geared toward the appropriate developmental level of implementation. Extraordinary improvements are not expected of a project that will not be fully implemented until the following year. Similarly, seemingly small gains or improvements in programs at an embryonic stage are recognized and appreciated in relation to their stage of development. In a fully operational and mature program, moderate improvements or declining outcomes are viewed more critically.

Despite its focus on self-determination and collaboration, empowerment evaluation and traditional external evaluation are not mutually exclusive. In fact, the empowerment evaluation process produces a rich data source that enables a more complete external examination.

Origins of the Idea

Empowerment evaluation has many sources. The idea first germinated during preparation of another book *Speaking the Language of Power: Communication, Collaboration, and Advocacy* (Fetterman, 1993c). In developing that collection, I wanted to explore the many ways that evaluators and social scientists could give voice to the people they work with and bring their concerns to policy brokers. I found that, increasingly, socially concerned scholars in myriad fields are making their insights and findings available to decision makers. These scholars and practitioners address a host of significant issues, including conflict resolution, the dropout problem, environmental health and safety, homelessness, educational reform, AIDS,

American Indian concerns, and the education of gifted children. The aim of these scholars and practitioners was to explore successful strategies, share lessons learned, and enhance their ability to communicate with an educated citizenry and powerful policymaking bodies. Collaboration, participation, and empowerment emerged as common threads throughout the work and helped to crystallize the concept of empowerment evaluation.

Empowerment evaluation has roots in community psychology and action anthropology. Community psychology focuses on people, organizations, and communities working to establish control over their affairs. The literature about citizen participation and community development is extensive. Rappaport's (1987) "Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology" is a classic in this area. Sol Tax's (1958) work in action anthropology focuses on how anthropologists can facilitate the goals and objectives of self-determining groups, such as Native American tribes. Empowerment evaluation also derives from collaborative and participatory evaluation (Choudhary and Tandon 1988; Papineau, and Kiely 1994; Shapiro 1988; Stull and Schensel 1987; Whitmore 1990; Whyte 1990).

A major influence was the national educational school reform movement with colleagues such as Henry Levin. Levin's Accelerated School Project (ASP) emphasizes the empowerment of parents, teachers, and administrators to improve educational settings. We worked to help design an appropriate evaluation plan for the Accelerated School Project which contributes to the empowerment of teachers, parents, students, and administrators (Fetterman and Haertel 1990). The ASP team and I also mapped out detailed strategies for district-wide adoption of the project in an effort to help institutionalize the project in the school system (Stanford University and American Institutes for Research 1992).

Dennis Mithaug's extensive work with individuals with disabilities to explore concepts of self-regulation and self-determination provided additional inspiration (1991; 1993). We recently completed a two-year Department of Education funded grant about self-determination and individuals with disabilities. We conducted research designed to help both providers for

students with disabilities and the students themselves become more empowered. We learned about self-determined behavior and attitudes and environmentally-related features of self-determination by listening to self-determined children with disabilities and their providers. Using specific concepts and behaviors extracted from these case studies, we developed a behavioral checklist to assist providers as they work to recognize and foster self-determination.

Self-determination[6], defined as the ability to chart one's own course in life, forms the theoretical foundation of empowerment evaluation. It consists of numerous interconnected capabilities, such as the ability to identify and express needs, establish goals or expectations and a plan of action to achieve them, identify resources, make rational choices from various alternative courses of action, take appropriate steps to pursue objectives, evaluate short- and long-term results (including reassessing plans and expectations and taking necessary detours), and persist in the pursuit of those goals. A breakdown at any juncture of this network of capabilities--as well as various environmental factors[7]--can reduce a person's likelihood of being self-determined. (See also Bandura 1982; concerning self-efficacy mechanism in human agency.)

A pragmatic influence on empowerment evaluation is the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's emphasis on empowerment in community settings. The foundation has taken a clear position concerning empowerment as a funding strategy: "We've long been convinced that problems can best be solved at the local level by the people who live with them on a daily basis. In other words, individuals and groups of people must be empowered to become changemakers and solve their own problems, through the organizations and institutions they devise....Through our community-based programming, we are helping to empower various individuals, agencies, institutions, and organizations to work together to identify problems and to find quality, cost-effective solutions. In doing so, we find ourselves working more than ever with grantees with whom we have been less involved -- smaller, newer organizations and their programs" (1992:6). Their work in the areas of youth, leadership, community-based health services, higher education, food systems, rural development, and families and neighborhoods exemplifies

this spirit of putting "power in the hands of creative and committed individuals -- power that will enable them to make important changes in the world" (1992:13). For example, one project--Kellogg's Empowering Farm Women to Reduce Hazards to Family Health and Safety on the Farm--involves a participatory evaluation component. The work of Sanders, Barley, and Jenness (1990) on cluster evaluations for the Kellogg Foundation also highlights the value of giving ownership of the evaluation to project directors and staff members of science education projects.

These influences, activities, and experiences form the background for this new evaluation approach. An eloquent literature on empowerment theory by Zimmerman (in press); Zimmerman et al (1992); Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988); and Dunst et al (1992), as discussed earlier, also informs this approach. A brief review of empowerment evaluation's many facets will illustrate its wide-ranging application.

Facets of Empowerment Evaluation

In this new context, training, facilitation, advocacy, illumination, and liberation are all facets--if not developmental stages--of empowerment evaluation. Rather than additional roles for an evaluator whose primary function is to assess worth (as defined by Stufflebeam, 1995 and Scriven, 1967), these facets are an integral part of the evaluation process. Cronbach's developmental focus is relevant and on target: the emphasis is on program development, improvement, and lifelong learning.

Training

In one facet of empowerment evaluation, evaluators teach people to conduct their own evaluations and thus become more self-sufficient. This approach desensitizes and demystifies evaluation and ideally helps organizations internalize evaluation principles and practices, making evaluation an integral part of program planning. Too often an external evaluation is an exercise in dependency rather than an empowering experience: In these instances, the process ends when

the evaluator departs, leaving participants without the knowledge or experience to continue on themselves. In contrast, an evaluation conducted by program participants is designed to be ongoing and internalized in the system, creating the opportunity for capacity building. Jean Ann Linney and Abraham Wandersman's *Prevention Plus III*, published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, illustrates how evaluators can teach people to conduct elementary evaluations of their own programs--in this case, primarily alcohol and other drug prevention programs (see chapter 12). Similarly, Steven Mayer and associates at Rainbow Research highlight the educational value of this approach; they produced an evaluation "Toolbox" to help corporations document the effectiveness of their services for affordable housing residents, a Program Self-Evaluation Tool for Programs Serving Battered Women, and an Act of Empowerment Logbook for program use in documenting participants' achievements (see chapter 15). The Charities Evaluation Services (CES), a United Kingdom-wide organization, provides training in self-evaluation and monitoring for members of non-profit and community organizations. Libby Cooper, the CES Director, emphasizes the need for participatory training to ensure that the experiences and expertise of those attending CES courses are acknowledged and developed. CES's work with a Belfast-based women's center focuses on the role women have played as a catalyst for the development of the wider community. CES provides training to help women monitor and evaluate their own work. In Western Ireland, they are evaluating the way an intermediary organization has sought to achieve the integration of people with disabilities. They are providing training to enable disabled people and their providers to participate with staff in the design and management of project services.

In empowerment evaluation, training is used to map out the terrain, highlighting categories and concerns. It is also used in making preliminary assessments of program components, while illustrating the need to establish goals, strategies to achieve goals, and documentation to indicate or substantiate progress. Training a group to conduct a self-evaluation can be considered equivalent to developing an evaluation or research design (since that is the core of the training), a standard part of any evaluation. This training is ongoing, as new skills

are needed to respond to new levels of understanding. Training also becomes part of the self-reflective process of self-assessment (on a program level), in that participants must learn to recognize when more tools are required to continue and enhance the evaluation process. This self-assessment process is pervasive in an empowerment evaluation -- built into every part of a program, even to the point of reflecting on how its own meetings are conducted and feeding that input into future practice.[8]

In essence, empowerment evaluation is the "give someone a fish and you feed her for one day; teach her to fish, and she will feed herself for the rest of her life" concept, as applied to evaluation. The primary difference is that in empowerment evaluation the evaluator and the individuals benefiting from the evaluation are typically on an even plane, learning from each other.

Facilitation

Empowerment evaluators serve as coaches or facilitators to help others conduct a self-evaluation. For example, the Oakland Unified School District was in the process of self-evaluation to assess their progress in carrying out their five-year plan. They had a District mission, a strategic approach, and a list of desired student outcomes. They adopted an empowerment evaluation approach. Superintendent Mesa, an enthusiastic supporter of the empowerment approach, and coordinators of the overall effort--Gary Yee, a former principal in the district, and Ed Ferran, a district staff member with extensive facilitation experience--recognized the value of the participatory process. Once staff members begin setting their own goals and identifying their own program performance indicators, program improvement becomes a powerful all-inclusive force. Staff members were asked to rate their performance, document that rating, and in some cases adjust their self-rating to accommodate group feedback. This process created a baseline against which to monitor future progress, established goals and milestones for the future, and highlighted the significance of documenting progress toward self-selected goals. It demystified the evaluation process, and helped staff members internalize

evaluation as a way of thinking about what they were doing on a regular basis. It also put them in charge of their own destinies, as they selected the intermediate goals and objectives required to have an impact on the larger, long-term goals of improving student performance and reducing dropout and crime rates.

In my role as coach, I provided general guidance and direction to the effort, attending sessions to monitor and facilitate as needed. It was critical to emphasize that the staff were in charge of this effort; otherwise program participants initially tend to look to the empowerment evaluator as expert, which would make them dependent on an outside agent. In some instances my task was to clear away obstacles and identify and clarify miscommunication patterns. I also participated in the first few Cabinet-level meetings in the district, providing explanations, suggestions, and advice at various junctures to help ensure that the process had a fair chance.

An empowerment evaluation coach can also provide useful information about how to create facilitation teams (balancing analytical and social skills), work with resistant (but interested) units, develop refresher sessions to energize tired units, and resolve various protocol issues. Simple suggestions along these lines can keep an effort from backfiring or being seriously derailed.

A coach may also be asked to help create the evaluation design with minimal additional support. For example, The Hebrew Union College asked for assistance in designing an action or empowerment-oriented evaluation. After some consultation and a study of relevant literature[9], the college reshaped its entire plan, choosing to have congregations throughout the country conduct their own self-evaluations. An empowerment evaluation was hired at a later date to help keep the process on track.

Whatever her contribution, the empowerment evaluation coach must ensure that the evaluation remains in the hands of program personnel. The coach's task is to provide useful information, based on the evaluator's training and past experience, to keep the effort on track.

Advocacy

In some instances, empowerment evaluators conduct an evaluation for a group, after the goals and evaluation design have been collaboratively established. They may even serve as direct advocates -- helping groups become empowered through evaluation. Evaluators often feel compelled to serve as advocates for groups that have no control over their own fates, such as the homeless or dropout populations. In an empowerment setting, advocate evaluators allow participants to shape the direction of the evaluation, suggest ideal solutions to their problems, and then take an active role in making social change happen.

A common workplace practice provides a familiar illustration of self-evaluation and its link to advocacy on an individual level. Employees often collaborate with both supervisor and clients to establish goals, strategies for achieving those goals and documenting progress, and realistic timelines. Employees collect data on their own performance and present their case for their performance appraisal. Self-evaluation thus becomes a tool of advocacy. This individual self-evaluation process is easily transferable to the group or program level.

Evaluators have a moral responsibility to serve as advocates--after the evaluation has been conducted and if the findings merit it. In a national study of dropouts, my post evaluation activities included disseminating generally positive findings to appropriate policymakers and preparing a Joint Dissemination Review Panel Submission. A series of gifted and talented education evaluations culminated in a book recommending that the U.S. Department of Education establish a gifted and talented center. Based in part on this recommendation, the Department of Education appointed me to the panel that selected a consortium of universities to create the center.

Politically savvy evaluators often work with senators and representatives. For example, based on his evaluation findings in the Chicago School Reform effort, Fred Hess (1993) testified before a congressional committee in support of an act to establish a national Demonstration Project of Educational Performance Agreements for School Restructuring. This act would provide local schools with more flexibility in the use of federal funds, in exchange for commitments to improve student performance. Based on his work in program design and

evaluation, Kim Hopper (1993) co-founded a local advocacy organization for the homeless in New York City. He has also served as an expert witness in public interest litigation involving the rights of homeless men and women. Margaret Weeks and Jean Schensul also demonstrated (1993) how ethnography and evaluation can be used to empower people as a tool of advocacy. Program staff in an AIDS prevention program used information about attitudes of injection drug users and prostitutes toward needle exchange to inform policy discussion and decision making. This same descriptive information was used to advocate for better access to services for HIV-positive people. Qualitative data were used to advocate for sustained funding for AIDS prevention programs on local, state, and national levels.

In another example, Linda Parker (1993) serves as an advocate for the Coushatta Tribe, in the role of economic development consultant. She combines her knowledge of the government grant system with a tribal officer's knowledge to help accomplish the tribe's objectives. Winning grants (with an evaluation) to serve tribal needs represents a concrete accomplishment in furthering the goals of self-determination.

Advocate evaluators write in public arenas to change public opinion, influence power brokers, and provide relevant information at opportune moments in the policy decision making forum. An excellent editorial piece about school dropouts in Chicago highlighted evaluation findings concerning minority education and school failure. His work was a catalyst for citywide educational and social change. Hopper writes newspaper editorials to respond critically to cultural "givens" or stereotypes about the homeless and to participate in social change on their behalf. In an Op-Ed piece in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, I wrote about lessons learned in a controversial environmental health and safety evaluation at Stanford University. This editorial piece focused on classic organizational conflicts of interest existing within college campuses, and the benefits of empowering health and safety workers to ensure safer working environments in higher education (Fetterman 1990a). Other Op-Ed pieces dispel myths about gifted and talented children and advocate on their behalf (Fetterman 1990b). Evaluators thus used the media to build a case for the people we work with, attempting to inform a concerned

and educated citizenry. These actions are in accord with Mill's (1959) position that:

> There is no necessity for working social scientists to allow the potential meaning of their work to be shaped by the "accidents of its setting," or its use to be determined by the purposes of other men [or women]. It is quite within their powers to discuss its meaning and decide upon its uses as matters of their own policy. (p. 177) [Bracketed comments added.]

Illumination

Illumination is an eye-opening, revealing, and enlightening experience. Typically, a new insight or understanding about roles, structures, and program dyamics is developed in the process of determining worth and striving for program improvement (see Parlett and Hamilton 1976). Empowerment evaluation is illuminating on a number of levels. Two cases from the Oakland School District self-evaluation highlight the illuminating qualities of this process or approach. During one meeting, members of the district's early childhood group decided after a lengthy and somewhat circuitous discussion that they wanted to link their work with student academic outcomes or test data--something they'd never done before in assessing their performance. Working with various district administrators they extracted the CTBS test data for children in the early childhood program from the District management information system and compared them with data for similar students in the district but not in the program. The data documented significantly higher educational achievement by students in the early childhood program. Program staff members found this to be an eye-opening or illuminating experience. The next tasks were to determine whether these findings held up with additional comparison, and to dig deeper to identify the specific reasons for the difference. This led to a detailed critical review of the entire program. It also opened doors that they did not know existed, such as access to an existing student data base within the district bureaucracy to help them understand the differences, measure the impact, and improve their program.

A meeting with one of the largest and most powerful units in the district resulted in a

research epiphany. Unit members thought of themselves as a very successful group, in spite of the district's overall poor performance. When one facilitator asked them to provide some evidence of their effectiveness, they pointed to their work in the area of school climate. After some discussion, they suggested that leadership training was the most significant variable affecting school climate (of the variables they had control over). They claimed to have five leadership teams operating at a high level of effectiveness. After requesting and receiving documentation to support this rating, the facilitator asked if they would have more impact if they had more teams. One member of the unit said, "We could have a dramatic effect if we had more teams and we worked at more schools." She then proceeded, with the assistance of the facilitator, to chart out a growth curve with an x and y axis and a dotted line running through it at a 45 degree angle predicting the type of positive impact anticipated from this increased effort. They agreed to set this new goal for the unit, rearrange their schedules and workloads to accommodate the expanded number of schools, and work toward this goal over the academic year -- collecting documentation about their progress throughout the year. This administrator, with little or no research background, developed a testable, researchable hypothesis in the middle of a discussion about indicators and self-evaluation. It was not only illuminating to the group (and to her), it revealed what they could do as a group when given the opportunity to think about problems and come up with workable options, hypotheses, and tests.

This experience of illumination holds the same intellectual intoxication each of us experienced the first time we came up with a researchable question. The process creates a dynamic community of learners as people engage in the art and science of evaluating themselves.

Liberation

Illumination often sets the stage for liberation. It can unleash powerful, emancipatory forces for self-determination. Liberation is the act of being freed or freeing oneself from pre-existing roles and constraints. It often involves new conceptualizations of oneself and others. Empowerment evaluation can also be liberating. Many of the examples in this discussion

demonstrate how helping individuals take charge of their lives -- and find useful ways to evaluate themselves -- liberates them from traditional expectations and roles. They also demonstrate how empowerment evaluation enables participants to find new opportunities, see existing resources in a new light, and redefine their identities and future roles.

For example, school nurses in the Oakland Public School system are using this approach to help them understand their own evolving role in the school district. Nurses are becoming more involved in assessing the life circumstances of the entire student population, rather than simply meeting individual student needs. They view the empowerment evaluation meeting activity as an opportunity to help define what their role will be in the future. In the process of redefining their role, they have designed specific tasks that will help them emerge as life circumstance-oriented health care providers, including conducting a school-wide assessment of the health conditions at the various sites, such as the percentage of students with asthma at each school site.

Empowerment evaluation can also be liberating on a larger sociopolitical level. Johann Mouton, Executive Director of the Centre for Science Development at the Human Sciences Research Council[10], and Johann Louw from the Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town invited me to speak about empowerment evaluation and conduct workshops throughout South Africa after Apartheid had ended but before the elections. These two individuals and the institutions they represent "reject racism and racial segregation and strive to maintain a strong tradition of non-discrimination with regard to race, religion, and gender."[11] The Centre for Science Development was the national funding agency for the human sciences in South Africa, and my empowerment evaluation workshops were conducted under the auspices of a then-new Directorate: Research Capacity Building, which focused primarily on building research capacity among black scholars in the country. Over a third of the participants in the workshops were black. This was an historic achievement by South African standards.

When Johann Louw and I first met, he said he was "intrigued and interested [in the approach, since] as you can imagine, empowerment is very much on the social agenda in this

country" (1993 personal communication). He invited me to work with him, assisting in the evaluation of various programs administered in and by an impoverished black community near Cape Town (see 1993 personal communication; Fetterman 1994). These community members were implementing and evaluating a broad range of community participation health care programs. They used self-evaluation to monitor and build on their successes and failures. This commendable work took place despite a context of disenfranchisement, high rates of unemployment, and disease. Acts of violence were a part of daily life.[12] (See Fetterman 1993b for a discussed of the culture of violence and the balance between hope and fear in South Africa.) This progressive self-reflective impoverished black community reflects the real spirit of hope persisting despite South Africa's culture of violence. [13] In another example, the Independent Development Trust, under the guidance of its director Professor Merlyn Mehl from the University of the Western Cape, is building empowerment evaluation into the process of reformulating national educational goals, including one of the country's most ambitious educational undertakings - the whole-school improvement of one thousand primary and secondary schools across the country (Mehl, Gillespie, Foale, and Ashley 1995). This new nation is rethinking and re-evaluating everything -- from social attitudes to land distribution. The issue of empowerment speaks to the heart of the reconstruction of South Africa.

Steps of Empowerment Evaluation

There are several pragmatic steps involved in helping others learn to evaluate their own programs: 1) taking stock or determining where the program stands, including strengths and weaknesses; 2) focusing on establishing goals--determining where you want to go in the future with an explicit emphasis on program improvement; 3) developing strategies and helping participants determine their own strategies to accomplish program goals and objectives; and 4) helping program participants determine the type of evidence required to document progress credibly toward their goals.

Step One: Taking Stock

One of the first steps in empowerment evaluation is taking stock. Program participants are asked to rate their program on a 1 to 10 scale, with 10 being the highest level. They are asked to make the rating as accurate as possible. Many participants find it less threatening or overwhelming to begin by listing, describing, and then rating individual activities in their program, before attempting a gestalt or overall unit rating. Specific program activities might include recruitment, admissions, pedagogy, curriculum, graduation, and alumni tracking in a school setting. The potential list of components to rate is endless, and each participant must prioritize the list of items - typically limiting the rating to the top 10 activities. Program participants are also asked to document their ratings (both the ratings of specific program components and the overall program rating). Typically, some participants give their programs an unrealistically high rating. However, the absence of appropriate documentation, peer ratings, and a reminder about the realities of their environment --such as a high dropout rate, students bringing guns to school, and racial violence in a high school -- helps participants recalibrate their rating. In some cases, ratings stay higher than peers consider appropriate. However, the significance of this process is not the actual rating so much as it is the creation of a baseline from which future progress can be measured. In addition, it sensitizes program participants to the necessity of collecting data to support assessments or appraisals.

Step Two: Setting Goals

After rating their program's performance and providing documentation to support that rating, program participants are asked how highly they would like to rate their program in the future. Then they are asked what goals they want to set to warrant that future rating. These goals should be established in conjunction with supervisors and clients to ensure relevance from both perspectives. In addition, goals should be realistic, taking into consideration such factors as initial conditions, motivation, resources, and program dynamics.

It is important that goals be related to the program's activities, talents, resources, and

scope of capability. One problem with traditional external evaluation is that programs have been given grandiose goals or long-term goals that participants could only contribute to in some indirect manner. There was no link between their daily activities and ultimate long-term program outcomes in terms of these goals. In empowerment evaluation, program participants are encouraged to select intermediate goals that are directly linked to their daily activities. These activities can then be linked to larger more diffuse goals, creating a clear chain of outcomes.

Program participants are encouraged to be creative in establishing their goals. A brainstorming approach is often used to generate a new set of goals. Individuals are asked to state what they think the program should be doing. The list generated from this activity is refined, reduced, and made realistic after the brainstorming phase, through a critical review and consensual agreement process.

There are also a bewildering number of goals to strive for at any given time. As a group begins to establish goals based on this initial review of their program, they realize quickly that a consensus is required to determine the most significant issues to focus on. These are chosen according to significance to the operation of the program, such as teaching; timing or urgency, such as recruitment or budget issues; and vision, including community building and learning processes.

Goal setting can be a slow process when program participants have a heavy work schedule. Sensitivity to the pacing of this effort is essential. Additional tasks of any kind and for any purpose may be perceived as simply another burden when everyone is fighting to keep their heads above water.

Step Three: Developing Strategies

Program participants are also responsible for selecting and developing strategies to accomplish program objectives. The same process of brainstorming, critical review, and consensual agreement is used to establish a set of strategies. These strategies are reviewed routinely to determine their effectiveness and appropriateness. Determining appropriate strategies,

in consultation with sponsors and clients, is an essential part of the empowering process. Program participants are typically the most knowledgeable about their own jobs, and this approach acknowledges and utilizes that expertise, in the process putting them back in the "driver's seat."

Step Four: Documenting Progress

In step four, program participants are asked what type of documentation is required to monitor progress toward their goals. This is a critical step. Each form of documentation is scrutinized for relevance to avoid devoting time to collecting information that will not be useful or relevant. Program participants are asked to explain how a given form of documentation is related to specific program goals. This review process is difficult and time consuming, but prevents wasted time and disillusionment at the end of the process. In addition, documentation must be credible and rigorous if it is to withstand the criticisms that this evaluation is self-serving. (See Fetterman 1994 for a detailed discussion of these steps and case examples.)

Caveats and Concerns

Is research rigor maintained? Empowerment evaluation is one approach among many being used to address social, educational, industrial, health care, and many other problems. As with the exploration and development of any new frontier, this approach requires adaptations, alterations, and innovations. This does not mean that significant compromises must be made in the rigor required to conduct evaluations. Although I am a major proponent of individuals taking evaluation into their own hands and conducting self-evaluations, I recognize the need for adequate research, preparation, and planning. These first discussions need to be supplemented with reports, texts, workshops, classroom instruction, and apprenticeship experiences if possible. Program personnel new to evaluation should seek the assistance of an evaluator to act as coach, assisting in the design and execution of an evaluation. Further, an evaluator must be judicious in determining when it is appropriate to function as an empowerment evaluator or in any other evaluative role.

Does this abolish traditional evaluation? New approaches require a balanced assessment. A strict constructionist perspective may strangle a young enterprise; too liberal a stance is certain to transform a novel tool into another fad. Colleagues who fear that we are giving evaluation away are right in one respect: we are sharing it with a much broader population. But those who fear that we are educating ourselves out of a job are only partially correct. Like any tool, empowerment evaluation is designed to address a specific evaluative need. It is not a substitute for other forms of evaluative inquiry or appraisal. We are educating others to manage their own affairs in areas they know (or should know) better than we do. At the same time, we are creating new roles for evaluators to help others help themselves.

How objective can a self-evaluation be? Objectivity is a relevant concern. We needn't belabor the obvious point that science and specifically evaluation have never been neutral. Anyone who has had to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty in program evaluation or policy arenas is aware that evaluation, like any other dimension of life, is political, social, cultural, and economic. It rarely produces a single truth or conclusion. In the context of a discussion about self-referent evaluation, Stufflebeam (1995) states that "As a practical example of this, in the coming years U.S. teachers will have the opportunity to have their competence and effectiveness examined against the standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and if they pass to become nationally certified" (p. 331). Regardless of one's position on this issue, evaluation in this context is a political act. What Stufflebeam considers an opportunity, some teachers consider a threat to their livelihood, status, and role in the community. This can be a screening device in which social class, race, and ethnicity are significant variables. The goal is "improvement," but the questions of for whom and at what price remain valid.

To assume that evaluation is all in the name of science or that it is separate, above politics or "mere human feelings"--indeed, that evaluation is *objective* -- is to deceive oneself and to do an injustice to others. Objectivity functions along a continuum - it is not absolute or dichotomous condition of all or none. Fortunately such objectivity is not essential to being critical. For example, I support programs designed to help dropouts pursue their education and prepare for a

career; however, I am highly critical of program implementation efforts. If the program is operating poorly, it is doing a disservice both to former dropouts and to taxpayers.

One needs only to scratch the surface of the "objective" world to see that it is shaped by values, interpretations, and culture. Whose ethical principles are evaluators grounded in? Do we all come from the same cultural, religious, or even academic tradition? Such an ethnocentric assumption or assertion flies in the face of our accumulated knowledge about social systems and evaluation. Similarly, assuming that we can "strictly control bias or prejudice" is naive, given the wealth of literature available on the subject, ranging from discussions about cultural interpretation to reactivity in experimental design.[14]

What about participant or program bias? The process of conducting an empowerment evaluation requires the appropriate involvement of stakeholders. The entire group -- not a single individual, not the external evaluator or an internal manager -- is responsible for conducting the evaluation. The group thus can serve as a check on individual members, moderating their various biases and agendas.

No individual operates in a vacuum. Everyone is accountable in one fashion or another and thus has an interest or agenda to protect. A school district may have a five-year plan designed by the superintendent; a graduate school may have to satisfy requirements of an accreditation association; an outside evaluator may have an important but demanding sponsor pushing either timelines or results, or may be influenced by training to use one theoretical approach rather than another.

In a sense, empowerment evaluation minimizes the effect of these biases by making them an explicit part of the process. The example of a self-evaluation in a performance appraisal is useful again here. An employee negotiates with his or her supervisor about job goals, strategies for accomplishing them, documentation of progress, and even the timeline. In turn, the employee works with clients to come to an agreement about acceptable goals, strategies, documentation, and timelines. All of this activity takes place within corporate, institutional, and/or community goals, objectives, and aspirations. The larger context, like theory, provides a lens in which to design a

self-evaluation. Supervisors and clients are not easily persuaded by self-serving forms of documentation. Once an employee loses credibility with a supervisor it is difficult to regain it. The employee thus has a vested interest in providing authentic and credible documentation. Credible data (as agreed on by supervisor and client in negotiation with the employee) serves both the employee and the supervisor during the performance appraisal process.

Applying this approach to the program or community level, superintendents, accreditation agencies, and other "clients" require credible data. Participants in an empowerment evaluation thus negotiate goals, strategies, documentation, and timelines. Credible data can be used to advocate for program expansion, redesign, and/or improvement. This process is an open one, placing a check on self-serving reports. It provides an infrastructure and network to combat institutional injustices. It is a highly (often brutally) self-critical process. Empowerment evaluation is successful because it adapts and responds to existing decision making and authority structures on their own terms (see Fetterman 1993c). It also provides an opportunity and a forum to challenge authority and managerial facades by providing data about actual program operations -- from the ground up. The approach is particularly valuable for disenfranchised people and programs to ensure that their voice is heard and that real problems are addressed.

Positions of Privilege

Empowerment evaluation is grounded in my work with the most marginalized and disenfranchised populations, ranging from urban school systems to community health programs in South African townships. They have educated me about what is possible in communities overwhelmed by violence, poverty, disease, and neglect. They have also repeatedly sensitized me to the power of positions of privilege. One dominant group has the vision, makes and changes the rules, enforces the standards, and need never question its own position or seriously consider any other. In such a view, differences become deficits rather than additive elements of culture. People in positions of privilege dismiss the contributions of a multicultural world. They create rational policies and procedures that systematically deny full participation in their community to people

who think and behave differently.

Evaluators cannot afford to be unreflective about the culturally embedded nature of our profession. There are many tacit prejudgments and omissions embedded in our primarily Western thought and behavior. These values, often assumed to be superior, are considered natural. However, Western philosophies have privileged their own traditions and used them to judge others who may not share them, disparaging such factors as ethnicity and gender. In addition, they systematically exclude other ways of knowing. Some evaluators are convinced that there is only one position and one sacred text in evaluation, justifying exclusion or excommunication for any "violations" or wrong thinking (see Stufflebeam 1994). Scriven's (1991, p. 260) discussion about perspectival evaluation is instructive in this context, highlighting the significance of adopting multiple perspectives, including new perspectives.

We need to keep open minds, including alternative ways of knowing -- but not empty heads. Skepticism is healthy; cynicism, blindness, and condemnation are not, particularly for emerging evaluative forms and adaptations. New approaches in evaluation and even new ways of knowing are needed if we are to expand our knowledge base and respond to pressing needs. As Campbell (1994) states, we should not "reject the new epistemologies out of hand....Any specific challenge to an unexamined presumption of ours should be taken seriously" (p. 293). Patton (1994) might be right "that the world will not end in a subjective bang, but in a boring whimper as voices of objectivity drifting off into the chaos" (p. 312).

Evaluation must change and adapt as the environment changes, or it will either be overshadowed by new developments or -- as a result of its unresponsiveness and irrelevance -- follow the path of the dinosaurs to extinction. People are demanding much more of evaluation and are not tolerant of the limited role of the outside expert who has no knowledge of or vested interest in their program or community. Participation, collaboration, and empowerment are becoming requirements in many community-based evaluations, not recommendations. Program participants are conducting empowerment and other forms of self- or participatory evaluations with or without us (the evaluation community). I think it is healthier for all parties concerned to work together to

improve practice, rather than ignore, dismiss, and condemn evaluation practice; otherwise we foster the development of separate worlds operating and unfolding in isolation from each other.

Dynamic Community of Learners

Many elements must be in place for empowerment evaluation to be effective and credible. Participants must have the latitude to experiment, taking both risks and responsibility for their actions. An environment conducive to sharing successes and failures is also essential. In addition, an honest, self-critical, trusting, and supportive atmosphere is required. Conditions need not be perfect to initiate this process. However, the accuracy and usefulness of self-ratings improve dramatically in this context. An outside evaluator who is charged with monitoring the process can help keep the effort credible, useful, and on track, providing additional rigor, reality checks, and quality controls throughout the evaluation. Without any of these elements in place, the exercise may be of limited utility and potentially self-serving. With many of these elements in place, the exercise can create a dynamic community of transformative learning.

Spreading the Word

Empowerment evaluation is drawing a great deal of attention. It was the theme of the annual meeting of the 1993 American Evaluation Association, as well as the subject of my presidential address. This collection about empowerment evaluation, builds on the foundation established for this approach and provides case examples and recommendations about the diverse applications of this approach. Evaluators throughout the world, ranging from OXFAM[15] in England to scholars in Israel[16] and auditors in Canada and Texas[17], have expressed their interest in this new approach. It crystallizes what many of these evaluators are already doing -- serving as a change agent to help others help themselves. Notable examples include work under way at Victoria University of Technology in Australia[18], the School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa[19], the Minority Affairs office at the University of Madison System[20], the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill[21] the College of Education at the University of

Arizona[22], the Psychology Department at the University of Rhode Island[23], Universite Laval in Quebec[24], Keystone University Research Corporation[25], the College of Human Ecology at Cornell University[26], Modesto Junior College[27], and the Virginia Commonwealth University[28]. Numerous organizations are working in precisely the same direction at the same time, including such diverse organizations as the Knowledge Utilization Society[29], the Transition Research Institute (funded by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services)[30], the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented[31], The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University[32], the Independent Sector[33], the Wisconsin School Evaluation Consortium[34], the California Institute of Integral Studies[35], the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention[36], the Multicultural Resource Center[37], Full Citizenship, Inc. and the National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation Research (of the U.S. Department of Education)[38], the National Center for Improving Science Education[39], GAO[40] and as discussed earlier universities, foundations, and impoverished black communities in South Africa.

Empowerment evaluation is creating a new niche in the intellectual landscape of evaluation. This approach is political in that it has an agenda -- empowerment. However, it is not liberal or conservative ideologically, nor positivist or phenomenological per se. It knows no political or geographic boundaries. It has a bias for the disenfranchised, including minorities, disabled individuals, and women. However, empowerment evaluation can be used to help anyone with a desire for self-determination. The ultimate test of any new approach is that as it becomes more clearly defined, useful, and acceptable, it becomes absorbed into the mainstream of evaluation. I look forward to the day when it will be simply one more tool in the evaluator's toolbox.

References

Alkin, M.C., Daillak, R., and White, P. (1979). Using Evaluations: Does Evaluation Make a Difference? Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Baggett, D. (1994). Using a Project Portfolio: Empowerment Evaluation for Model Demonstration Projects. Interchange, 13(1):5-7. (Transition Research Institute. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.)

Bandura, A. (1982). Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. American Psychologist, 37:122-147.

Dunst, C.J., C.M. Trivette, and N. LaPointe (1992). Toward Clarification of the Meaning and Key Elements of Empowerment. Family Science Review, 5(1&2):111-130.

Choudhary, A. and Tandon, R. (1988). Participatory Evaluation. New Delhi, India: Society for Participatory Research in Asia.

Fetterman, D.M. (1995). In Response to Dr. Daniel Stufflebeam's: "Empowerment Evaluation, Objectivist Evaluation, and Evaluation Standards: Where the Future of Evaluation Should Not Go and Where It Needs to Go," October 1994, 321-338. Evaluation Practice, 16(2).

Fetterman, D.M. (1993a). Evaluate Yourself. The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut.

Fetterman, D.M. (1993b). Confronting a Culture of Violence: South Africa Nears a Critical Juncture. San Jose Mercury, October 3, pp. 1C and 4C.

Fetterman, D.M. (1993c). Speaking the Language of Power: Communication, Collaboration, and Advocacy (Translating Ethnography into Action). London, England: Falmer Press.

Fetterman, D.M. (1990a). Health and Safety Issues: Colleges Must Take Steps to Avert Serious Problems. The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 21, p. A 48.

Fetterman, D.M. (1990b). Wasted Genius. Stanford Magazine, May 18(2):30-33. Reprinted in the San Jose Mercury, July 22.

Fetterman, D.M. and Haertel, E.H. (1990). A School-Based Evaluation Model for Accelerating the Education of Students At-Risk. ERIC ED 313 495. Clearinghouse on Urban

Education.

Fetterman, D.M. (1988). Excellence and Equality: A Qualitatively Different Perspective on Gifted and Talented Education. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Gray, S.T (ed.) (1993) Leadership Is: A Vision of Evaluation. Washington, D.C.: Independent Sector.

Hess, G.A., Jr. (1993). Testifying on the Hill: Using Ethnographic Data to Shape Public Policy. In Fetterman, D.M. (ed.) Speaking the Language of Power: Communication, Collaboration, and Advocacy (Translating Ethnography into Action). London, England: Falmer Press, pp. 38-49.

Hopper, K. (1993). On Keeping an Edge: Translating Ethnographic Findings and Putting Them to Use - NYC's Homeless Policy. In Fetterman, D.M. (ed.) Speaking the Language of Power: Communication, Collaboration, and Advocacy (Translating Ethnography into Action). London, England: Falmer Press, pp. 19-37.

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). The program evaluation standards. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Linney, J.A. and Wandersman, A. (1991). Prevention Plus III (Assessing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs at the School and Community Level: A Four-Step Guide to Useful Program Assessment). Rockville, MD: Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Louw, J. (1993). Personal Communication.

Mehl, M. Gillespie, G. Foale, S. and Ashley, M. (1995). Project in Progress: The First Year and a Half of the Thousand Schools Project (May 1993-December 1994). Cape Town, South Africa: The Independent Development Trust.

Mills, C.W. (1959). The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mithaug, D.E. (1993). Self-regulation Theory: How Optimal Adjustment Maximizes Gain. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Mithaug, D.E. (1991). Self-determined Kids: Raising Satisfied and Successful Children.

New York: Macmillan (Lexington imprint).

Oja, S.N. and Smulyan, L. (1989). Collaborative Action Research. Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Papineau, D. and Kiely, M.C. (1994). Participatory Evaluation: Empowering Stakeholders in a Community Economic Development Organization. The Community Psychologist, 27(2):56-57.

Parker, L. and Langley, B. (1993). Protocol and Policy-making Systems inn American Indian Tribes. In Fetterman, D.M. (ed.) Speaking the Language of Power: Communication, Collaboration, and Advocacy (Translating Ethnography into Action). London, England: Falmer Press, pp. 70-75.

Parlett, M. and Hamilton, D. (1976). Evaluation as Illumination: A New Approach to the Study of Innovatory Programmes. In D. Hamilton (ed.), Beyond the Numbers Game. London: Macmillan.

Patton, M. (1986). Utilization-focused Evaluation. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of Empowerment/exemplars of Prevention: Toward a Theory for Community Psychology. American Journal of Community Psychology, 15,121-148.

Reason, P. (ed.) (1988). Human Inquiry in Action: Developments in New Paradigm Research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Sanders, J.R., Barley, Z.A. and Jenness, M.R. (1990). Annual Report: Cluster Evaluation in Science Education. (Unpublished report.)

Scriven, M.S. (1967). The methodology of evaluation. In R. E. Stake (Ed.), Curriculum Evaluation. AERA Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation (Vol. 1). Chicago: Rand McNally.

Shapiro, J.P. (1988). Participatory evaluation: Toward a transformation of assessment for women's studies programs and projects. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 10(3):191-199.

Stanford University and American Institutes for Research (1992). A Design for Systematic

Support for Accelerated Schools. In Response to the New American Schools Development Corporation RFP for Designs for a New Generation of American Schools. Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research.

Stevenson, J., Mitchell, R.E., and Florin, P. (1995). Evaluation and Power in Community Prevention Coalitions. In Fetterman, D.M., Wandersman, A., and Kaftarian, S. (eds.) Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-assessment and Accountability. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Stufflebeam, D.L. (1995). Empowerment Evaluation, Objectivist Evaluation, and Evaluation Standards: Where the Future of Evaluation Should Not Go and Where It Needs to Go. Evaluation Practice, 15(3):321-338.

Stull, D. and Schensul, J. (1987). Collaborative Research and Social Change: Applied Anthropology in Action. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Tax, S. (1958). The Fox Project. Human Organization, 17, 17-19.

Transitions. (1992). Battle Creek, MI: W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

van der Walt, Hester (1993). Training for Self-Evaluation at Ithusheng Health Centre. Centre for Epidemiologial Research in Southern Africa, Medical Research Council. Tygerberg: South Africa.

Watkins, J.M. (1992). Critical Friends in the Fray: An Experiment in Applying Critical Ethnography to School Restructuring. In Hess, F. (ed.) Empowering Teachers and Parents: School Restructuring Through the Eyes of Anthropologists. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Weeks, M.R. and Schensul, J.J. (1993). Ethnographic Research on AIDS Risk Behavior and the Making of Policy. In Fetterman, D.M. (ed.) Speaking the Language of Power: Communication, Collaboration, and Advocacy (Translating Ethnography into Action). London, England: Falmer Press, pp. 50-69.

Whitmore, E. (1990). Empowerment in program evaluation: A Case Example. Canadian Social Work Review, 7(2):215-229.

Whyte, W.F. (ed.) (1990). Participatory Action Research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Zimmerman, M.A. (in press). Empowerment Theory: Psychological, Organizational, and Community Levels of Analysis. In Rappaport, J. and Seldman, E. (eds.) Handbook of Community Psychology. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Zimmerman, M.A., B.A. Israel, A. Schulz, and B. Checkoway (1992). Further Explorations in Empowerment Theory: An Empirical Analysis of Psychological Empowerment. American Journal of Community Psychology, 20(6):707-727.

Zimmerman, M.A. and J. Rappaport (1988). Citizen Participation, Perceived Control, and Psychological Empowerment. American Journal of Community Psychology, 16, (5): 725-750.

---

[1] It has been institutionalized as part of the Collaborative, Participatory, and Empowerment Evaluation Topical Interest Group (TIG). TIG chairs are David Fetterman and Jean King. All interested evaluators are invited to join the TIG and attend our business meetings, which are open to any member of the association.

[2] Although there are many problems with the standards and the application of the standards to empowerment evaluation, and the fact that they have not been formally adopted by any professional organization, they repesent a useful tool for self-reflection and examination. Empowerment evaluation meets or excedes the spirit of the standards in terms of utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy (see Fetterman 1995 for a detailed examination).

[3] The Texas State Auditor's Office is already successfully using empowerment evaluation (Keller 1994).

[4] See Stevenson, Mitchell, and Florin (1995) for a detailed explanation of these distinctions. See also Zimmerman (in press) for more detail about empowerment theory focusing on psychological, organizational, and community levels of analysis.

[5] Using traditional evaluation language, the investigation of worth or merit and plans for program improvement become the means by which self-determination is fostered, illumination generated, and liberation actualized.

[6] One of the many heart-warming stories that emerged from the case study section of the individuals with disabilities and self-determination study highlights what self-determination is all about. This story involves a young high school girl who has Cerebral Palsy and is quadriplegic. In elementary school she was classified as a special education, mentally retarded student and grouped accordingly. She knew she did not belong in this special education class. One day during recess, she hid behind some advanced students she had been speaking with and followed them right into their classroom in her motorized wheel chair. She made sure there were plenty of students in front of her to camouflage her entrance. She knew she belonged with them, and she gambled (successfully) that no one would have the nerve to kick her out. No one did, and the teachers quickly learned that she was a gifted and talented student -- not a special education, mentally retarded or remedial education student. This is an example of gutsy self-determination.

[7] Concerning individuals with disabilities, self-determination exists in varying degrees and is enhanced or diluted by developmental factors (including age and maturity), type or degree of disability, and environmental conditions. For example, a supportive provider and a supportive school environment generate opportunities and encourage risk taking, exploration, and the development of abilities. The absence of these supportive environmental features limits opportunities, creates obstacles, and fosters dependency and/or despondent behavior.

[8] In anthropology and folklore this is called a folk culture or more specifically an evaluation folk culture.

[9] One of the most significant recommendations included reading John Watkin's (1992) chapter "Critical Friends in the Fray: An Experiment in Applying Critical Ethnography to School Restructuring," as well as various books about evaluation methodology.

[10] The Centre for Science Development provided complete support for these activities, including the keynote presentation at the national Symposium on Program Evaluation and the Empowerment Evaluation and Qualitative Workshops in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, and Cape Town.

[11] This phrase also represents a self-rating. The key to understanding empowerment evaluation is precisely in the interpretation of this self-rating. It is a form of cultural interpretation. Individuals who read this sentence and conclude "I don't believe them" are viewing the present through the lens of the past. Interpreting this statement as the place to begin, rather than a place to conclude, allows you to ask what's next, what will you do to accomplish this, how will you monitor and document it, and what do you plan to do next year to build on successes and failures?

[12] Violence and fear permeate the consciousness of every South African. The newspapers have become a daily record of stonings, stabbings, and shootings. My drive to this community passed directly by Guguletu; Amy Biehl, a Fulbright scholar and Stanford graduate, was stabbed and beaten to death only a few miles from where I worked.

[13] See the Training for Self-Evaluation at Ithusheng Health Centre report (1993) by Hester van der Walt and Lies Hoogendoorn for an excellent example of how to train nonliterate community members and program participants conduct a self-evaluation.

[14] See Fetterman (1982) for additional discussion about reactivity.

[15] OXFAM was founded in 1942. They work "with poor people regardless of race or religion in their struggle against hunger, disease, exploitation and poverty in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East through relief, development, research overseas and public education at home." OXFAM contacted AEA in December 1992, through the president-elect, communicating their clear interest in empowerment evaluation.

[16] Professor Arza Churchman and her doctoral students, from Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, are working on the development of a theory of empowerment within the context of community planning.

[17] The Texas State Auditor's Office found that virtually no evaluation had been performed of the effectiveness of probation itself or of individual rehabilitation programs in the Texas Adult Probation system. In an effort to shift this mentality of compliance (or non-compliance) to one of effectiveness, the State Auditor's Office set up an evaluation model of probation programs statewide and of specific probation intervention programs, emphasizing the responsibility of entities to perform their own ongoing effectiveness evaluations.

[18] Delwyn Goodrick's work in the areas of AIDS, the evaluation of homelessness prevention, birthing needs, eating disorders, and participatory evaluation for the Commonwealth Department of Finance highlight the utility of the empowerment evaluation approach. See also Wadsworth's self-evaluation and research work as represented by the Action Research Issues Association in Melbourne.

[19] Charles Rapp, Wes Shera, and Walter Kisthardt's work in the area of consumer empowerment highlights the role of ethnography in empowerment research and evaluation.

[20] Hazel Symonett's work in the Minority Affairs office at the University of Wisconsin System highlights the power of empowerment evaluation and self-evaluation throughout a university system, as the University designs for diversity in a multi-cultural environment.

[21] Charles Usher's child welfare reform initiatives work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with the Center for the Study of Social Policy is quite consistent with empowerment evaluation. His 1993 report titled Self-Evaluation in the Prince George's County Services Reform

Initiative is an instructive and useful example of empowerment evaluation.

[22] Amy Schlessman-Frost's work in the area of democratic models and multicultural educational evaluation has clear implications and applications for empowerment evaluation.

[23] John Stevenson's efforts with the Community Research and Services Team at the University of Rhode Island have aspired for several years to play the kind of role required to conduct empowerment evaluations. They have been influenced by many of the same sources of inspiration described in this text. They also identify with the action research tradition initiated by Kurt Lewin. They are attempting to build the capacity of local prevention efforts with evaluation skills. They discuss some of the obstacles associated with such efforts, including problems with single training sessions with little or no follow-through.

[24] Helene Johnson is an evaluation consultant at Universite Laval, Direction generale du premier cycle. Building on a stakeholder evaluation approach, she conducts periodic evaluations of University programs in a manner that empowers participants -- often providing a voice for students in their communication with faculty and administrators.

[25] Joyce Miller Iutcovich's work in assessing the needs of rural elderly is based on an empowerment model.

[26] William Trochim's application of concept mapping to school districts and supported employment programs for persons with severe mental illness highlights the participatory component of empowerment evaluation, as the content of the map is entirely determined by the group. In addition, see Elizabeth Whitmore, Willem van der Eyken, Barbara Clinton, Jennifer Greene, Doreen Greenstein, and Daniel Selener's views on this subject as presented in the Cornell Empowerment Project.

[27] David Baggett (1994) is using empowerment evaluation to evaluate model demonstration projects. He advises projects to adopt a porfolio process to collect information about their activities, ranging from planning to research and dissemination activities. He has also used empowerment evaluation to guide the develop an employment portfolio.

[28] Sally Schumacher and Wendy Wood use empowerment evaluation as they explore strategies to generate national policy options for adults with traumatic brain injury.

[29] The President of the Knowledge Utilization Society invited me to present a plenary presentation about empowerment evaluation at their Seventh Annual Meeting on April 21, 1993. The theme of the conference was "Using Knowledge to Empower Organizational Change: Working Smarter and Targeting for Results."

[30] The Director of the Transition Research Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign invited me to conduct an empowerment evaluation workshop for all the directors of Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services-funded model transition demonstration projects, as well as directors of State Systems for Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities Programs and directors of Regional Resource Centers and project officers, including Michael Ward. The focus of their evaluation technical assistance matches the empowerment evaluation approach -- helping people help themselves through evaluation. "The workshop goal is to increase the capacity of directors of model transition demonstration projects to discover, understand, and believe that evaluation activities can lead to self-determination, that is, evaluation practice can and should be integral to program planning and implementation." The evaluation of the workshop documented significant success in each of these areas.

[31] The Center has issued and widely disseminated a report about self-evaluation titled Evaluation Yourself (Fetterman 1993a). In addition, I provided an empowerment evaluation workshop for teachers and researchers at the Center's Building a Bridge Between Research and Classroom Practices in Gifted Education Conference (1995).

[32] James Sanders evaluation work with grassroots community groups while at the Kellogg Foundation highlighted the "concept of evaluation as a human activity that is the responsibility of all who are involved in the project." In addition, he focuses on the internalization of evaluation concepts and practices for self-improvement and capacity building. Zoe Barley and Mark Jenness

multi-site evaluation work of community-based programs with the Kellogg Foundation also represents a form of empowerment evaluation. They are conducting cluster evaluations for Kellogg with an emphasis on empowering the science education cluster projects. In addition, I was an invited visiting scholar at Western Michigan University for the express purpose of presenting and exploring empowerment evaluation.

33 Sandra Trice Gray, Vice President, Leadership and Management and International Initiatives, from the Independent Sector, has developed under her leadership an elaborate vision of evaluation "as a means of achieving organizational effectiveness and renewal." Their approach follows the empowerment evaluation model, ranging from asking groups to identify their own goals to linking evaluation to strategic planning and achievement of a program's mission. (See Gray, S.T. (ed.) (1993) *Leadership is: A Vision of Evaluation*. Washington, D.C.: Independent Sector.

34 Jake Blasczyk, Director of the Wisconsin School Evaluation Consortium and the Wisconsin North Central Association, is helping school districts put in place long-range plans to reform education. Moreover, he has developed an excellent self-study guide for program evaluation that he is using in 40% of Wisconsin's K-12 school districts.

35 As the Director of Research and Evaluation at the California Institute of Integral Studies, I have been provided with the opportunity to initiate an empowerment evaluation approach to self-assessment and improvement in the School for Transformative Learning. This approach has been adopted as part of the accreditation self-study process to improve teaching, research, governance, and administration. In addition it is designed to be highly interactive in both face-to-face communication at the Institute and through synchronous and asynchronous electronic communication throughout the United States using America On-line and the Electronic University Network.

36 Darlind Davis's Plenary presentation at the 1993 American Evaluation Association annual meeting in Dallas, Texas highlighted the Center's commitment to empowerment evaluation in their work. In addition, this organization was instrumental in publishing *Prevention Plus III*.

37 The Center has asked me to provide empowerment evaluation workshops to help parents evaluate gifted and talented programs in Los Angeles -- focusing on the needs of minority gifted and talented students.

38 R. M. Stineman from Full Citizen, Inc. is developing an empowerment evaluation tool for community compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. They are using this tool to ensure involvement of city government, the business community, people with disabilities and their families, disability organizations, and other community leaders. This project is funded by NIDRR. I am serving as a coach and consultant on the project.

39 M. Jean Young and Susan Loucks-Horsley use empowerment evaluation through technical assistance to build capacity of Department of Energy Precollege Education staff members.

40 Eleanor Chelimsky, Assistant Comptroller General for Program Evaluation and Methodology, has collected evaluative data from program beneficiaries to illuminate a social situation in a way that also assists decisionmakers to understand the particular impacts of a program on relevant parties. In essence, GAO uses empowerment evaluation by giving voice to patients, the disabled, businesspersons, and immigrants, all of whom may be the intended beneficiaries of government programs.